



Foggy Bottom News

February 1997

Published for and by the Citizens of Foggy Bottom and West End

Volume 39, No. 4

Crestar To Close Citizens Bank Branch

The community and depositors have been notified by Citizens Bank of their intention to close the bank branch at Potomac Plaza, and a group of Foggy Bottom residents have banded together to change that decision if at all possible.

The bank, started as the McLachlen Bank back in the 1950s, is now a Citizens Bank branch which will be part of Crestar. The citizens' group, led by **Marian Owens** of Potomac Plaza Terraces and **Marilyn Rubin** of Columbia Plaza, wants the branch to stay open because:

It is used by many senior citizens, including those at St. Mary's Court, who are uncomfortable having to cross Virginia Avenue to do banking;

It has services (parking, drive-in, late hours and safety deposit boxes) which others do not have and which truly serve the residents;

It has a history of friendliness and service appreciated by the neighborhood.

A meeting was held January 9 at St. Mary's Court, with two bank representatives and residents from St. Mary's Court, Potomac Plaza and Potomac Plaza Terraces, Columbia Plaza, The Plaza, the Foggy Bottom Association, the Pan American Health Organization, and from Councilmember Jack Evans' office. The group asked Eric Dawes, Regional Vice President of Citizens Bank, and Will Delay, Branch Manager, to relate to their superiors the concern of the neighborhood, and requested that the closure be delayed to allow time for the bank and residents to work on a solution. Many of the buildings are circulating petitions as well.

It's Really Gone!



After to these many years, the "ramp to nowhere" is now nowhere. Above, DPW machinery tears at the last vestiges of the ramp just west of 26th Street between I and K Streets. The ramp remained when a highway project residents felt would devastate several D.C. neighborhoods was abandoned. Shown to the right is the very last support to be torn down.

Update:

BZA Denies Church and GWU Request to Reopen Health & Wellness Case

St. Mary's Episcopal Church and The George Washington University requested that the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) reopen the record of GWU's Health & Wellness Center.

The request by the church and the university came before the Board of Zoning Adjustment on January 8, and was denied. The members of the BZA noted that the written order is scheduled to be issued soon, and they felt there was not sufficient reason to bypass their procedures. In addition to the FBA, statements of objection were filed by ANC Commissioners Bernard Mozer, Maria Tyler and Dorothy Miller. Mozer is the newly elected commissioner for the single member district in which the proposed center would be built.

The December 13 letter was signed by attorney Richard B. Netter on behalf of St. Mary's Church, and by Charles Barber, GWU Senior Counsel. They asked that the BZA "exercise its authority . . . and, on its own motion re-open the record. . .," claiming that the church (described in the letter as "the primary opposition") and the applicant (the university) have resolved their differences. According to a mockup of the area made by the university, it has proposed moving the north side of the building back in order to help protect the historic church from adverse impacts from the construction and the bulk of the building itself.

The Foggy Bottom Association had requested the BZA, via a let-

Continued on p. 3

CFO Williams to Address February Meeting

Anthony A. Williams, Chief Financial Officer of the District of Columbia, will be the featured speaker at the January meeting of the Foggy Bottom Association. The meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 27, at 7:30 at the Wyndham Bristol Hotel, 2430 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., in Potomac Rooms 1 & 2 (toward the back of the hotel on the lower level).

Williams holds the top financial office in the city, appointed

by Mayor Barry, but working closely with the Financial Control Board (the only body authorized to relieve him of his duties). In recent weeks he has brought many of the city agencies' financial officers under his direct control, and has also taken over responsibility for the lottery office.

You will want to be on hand to hear from this official who wields so much influence over our city and the lives of its residents.

NCPC Orders Changes in Red Cross Building

At a hearing on January 9, the National Capital Planning Commission deferred until its February 6 meeting their decision on the Red Cross building, and requested that several changes in the building plan be made. The Red Cross had planned to demolish its current building on E Street, rebuild part of it, and erect a 1900-worker office building on the site. Among the changes requested were to conform the height to and allow more light for the adjacent residential building, and to redo their study of the traffic implications of the building and its greatly increased occupants. It was also reported in the testimony of ANC Chair and Commissioner Sara Maddux that the Red Cross plans to use this as a central communications center, introducing a potential for increased electromagnetic facilities.

FOGGY BOTTOM ASSOCIATION MEETING

Speaker:

Anthony Williams
Chief Financial Officer
District of Columbia

Monday, January 27, 1997

Wyndham Bristol Hotel

2430 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

7:30 p.m.

(Next Meeting: Monday, February 26, 1997)

The Becker Beat



Latest quote from GWU President Trachtenberg on the subject of the Foggy Bottom neighborhood: He said in a long article in *Independence Magazine*: "With each passing year, the University acquires more of the real estate within the areas of the city that we've been permitted to think of as the campus under the city-validated campus plan. And, as I have said on numerous occasions, life can go round or life can go flat. We can do this hard or we can do this easy. My expectation is that within some foreseeable period of time, make it fifty years if you like, make it seventy-five years, make it a century, that the greater portion of the Foggy Bottom area will be University campus. . . . (Emphasis supplied)"

"And in some period of time, the University will acquire these properties, because of our policy, as I've publicly stated, is to purchase properties within the Foggy Bottom area that constitutes the University campus, that are affordable and that are offered to us."

The article, in the issue which came out in early December, touches on other aspects of GWU/FB relations, as well as general university topics. Those concerned about the university's growth might wish to obtain a

copy for the full text.

And another newspaper, at about the same time, reported the sale of property at 23rd & G Street to the University for 3.4 million dollars. The university already owns most of a row of houses on Virginia Avenue, the other side of this triangular piece of land. This triangle is currently outside the campus plan.

Two more subjects: Sometime after the article by *The Observer* was printed, there was a phone call on my answering machine from a man called Paul. His last name began, I think, with an S, but it was not clear, and when I returned the call found that the number was not in service. I suspect I misunderstood or wrote it down wrong. In any event, his message was about his finding a lack of friendliness in FB, and I did want to hear more. Please call again, Paul S; I want to hear about your experiences.

The other subject is *The Observer*, who sent a response to the responses to the article. One paragraph contained what might be some good advice: "Perhaps folks should start getting out and traveling the back and front, the alleys, and hidden walkways like I do. It would be an eye-opener."

New Term Begins for ANC

New terms for ANC-2A's commissioners began in January, with one new member, **Bernard Mozer**, elected in November to represent Single Member District 2A04 (covering the Watergate, Potomac Plaza and Potomac Plaza Terraces, etc.) At press time new officers had not been chosen, nor had the dates and locations for meetings been set. During 1996, meetings were held on the third Wednesday of each

month at the State Plaza Hotel. The other commissioners are **Jean Swift** of SMD 2A01 located in the northern section of the GW campus area; **Michael R. Geroe** of SMD 2A02 (north of Pennsylvania Avenue); **Maria Tyler** of 2A03 (south of Pennsylvania Avenue including the historic district); **Dorothy Miller**, 2A05 in the Columbia Plaza area; and **Sara Maddux**, 2A06 in the southeastern part of the campus area.

DPW Plans For 2020

The Department of Public Works (DPW) continues to move forward with developing a plan for a transportation system for Washington for the year 2020. The District of Columbia, like each of the 50 States, is required by the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to prepare a comprehensive transportation plan for the next 20 years. With this mandate, the goal of the District has been to assess the ways that transportation can not only improve the service and efficiency of the District's transportation system, but will also improve the overall quality of life and attractiveness of the city.

DPW has used scenario planning meetings with community groups to develop a range of possible outcomes for this transportation plan. Following these meetings, another set of meetings helped to define an action plan for determining priorities for realizing a transportation vision for the District. The Foggy Bottom Association was represented at most of these meetings by FBA board member Richard J. Price.

Most recently, DPW issued a draft report that includes its preliminary recommendations for a transportation plan for the District based on all these meetings. If DPW gets its way, the existing reactive planning process will be replaced with strategic planning based on the goals of the plan. Goals of the plan of particular interest to Foggy Bottom residents include: reducing the impact of suburb to city travel on District residents by intercepting automotive traffic at key locations and providing excellent alternatives to driving in the city; improving the efficiency and attractiveness of the existing transportation system by improving streetscaping and signage; and developing a signature transportation system,

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Foggy Bottom News

The *Foggy Bottom News* is a publication of the Foggy Bottom Association. All editorial assistance is contributed on a volunteer basis by residents of the area.

Editor **Ellie Becker**
Ad Manager..... **Steve Timlin**
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To place ads, call Steve Timlin at 338-8750. Cost for classified ads is 80¢ per word; a 2-inch high by 2-column (or 4-inch high by 1-column wide) ad — the smallest available — is \$38.50.

FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

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March issue: to be distributed February 22

Copy Deadline: February 7, camera ready: February 14

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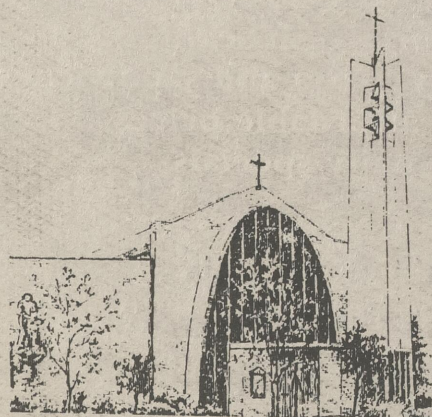
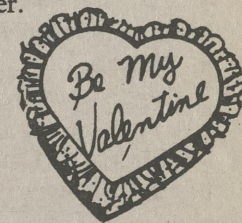
Lucille Molinelli
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Sandra Vonetes

such as a water transportation system for the Potomac River, that would service Georgetown, Foggy Bottom and Southwest.

All these, of course, require sufficient funding to be implemented, and money is in short supply these days. Some goals are more affordable than others. One of these is pedestrian corridor development. At its last meeting, DPW presented a list of corridors it might focus on for beautification. The only Foggy Bottom corridors included on the list

were Virginia Ave. from Constitution to the Kennedy Center, and M St./Pennsylvania Ave to Washington Circle. Because Foggy Bottom was represented at this meeting, DPW and its consultants will also be considering New Hampshire from Washington Circle to the Kennedy Center.



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Susan Puffenbarger Dies

Susan Puffenbarger, 39, who lived with her husband, Charles "Puff" Puffenbarger, on Eye Street, died January 7. The death occurred at GWU Hospital, evidently following an accidental choking on food.

Susan was a graduate of GWU, and prior to her marriage nine years ago was employed in several editorial positions. For several years she helped with delivery of the *Foggy Bottom News*, and also did some writing assignments.

She is survived by her husband, a journalism professor at GWU, her mother, two sisters and a brother. A journalism scholarship fund is being established at GWU in her memory.

Contributions may be sent to the Susan Puffenbarger Fund, c/o Journalism Department, Room 409, Phillips Hall, GWU, Washington, DC 20062.

Sandra Vonetes Father Dies

John Vonetes, 80, the father of Sandra Vonetes, FBA Board member and owner of Flowers by Sandra, died in January after an extended illness. Mr. Vonetes lived with his wife in Petersburg, Virginia, and prior to his illness was often seen helping at her shop. Our condolences to Sandra and to her mother and sister Maria, and her entire family.



Haddad Presents Painting to Administration

On November 26, St. Mary's Court hosted an unusual and memorable event. Adele Haddad, a gifted artist and poet and a resident of the Court since 1979, presented her painting of the north front of the White House to Dr. Robyn Stone, Acting Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Administration on Aging.

Ms. Haddad has been very active in art classes at the Court and has provided beautiful poetry for a wide variety of events held at the Court over the last seventeen years.

Many examples of her artwork can be seen at the Court.

Ms. Haddad wished to acknowledge the many services provided by the government to elderly persons in the U.S., and presentation of her painting to the government was her means of expressing that appreciation.

Dr. Stone, who graciously accepted the painting on behalf of the government, delivered an informative and encouraging assessment of government efforts to aid the elderly population of the United States.

Update (from page 1)

ter from its president, to deny the joint request. Among the reasons for its request, the FBA reiterated that the record cannot be reopened prior to issuance of a written order from the BZA, that several issues other than St. Mary's concerns have not been resolved, and that all parties to the case have not been advised of the new proposal. The Health and Wellness Center application was denied by the BZA in November, 1994, after two hearings earlier in the year, citing inconsistencies with the campus plan criteria for that location. A written order of that decision has not been issued; such a delay is not unusual.

Traffic Meeting Postponed

At the November meeting of the FBA, plans for a community meeting to discuss traffic problems were announced. According to John Fanning, the Mayor's Ward 2 Ombudsman, traffic officials want to share observations and data DPW has collected and ask for community suggestions on alleviating traffic problems in the following area: Pennsylvania Avenue and Washington Circle on the south, P Street on the north, Rock Creek on the west, and New Hampshire Avenue & 21st Street on the east. As of press time, after several date changes, it may be scheduled for sometime in February, probably at the Reeves Center, 2000 14th Street, N.W.

GWU Hospital Plans

The FBA is still hoping to present speakers to discuss the plans for the University Hospital's merger with the OrNda Health Corporation. The University is eager to inform the community about the plans, but FBA is hoping to book an outside expert in hospital mergers to provide additional information. Stay tuned.

Women's Health Care: Be Informed

It's critical for women to read the fine print of health benefit packages, compare plans carefully, and select health plans that meet their individual needs, according to *The National Women's Health Report*, published by the National Women's Health Resource Center, Washington, DC. Asking specific questions about maternity coverage, as well as other services provided by a health plan, can help women navigate the fast changing world of health coverage.

"Women's Healthcare Cover-

age: Be Informed," recommends questions for women to ask about health care coverage and other special considerations. In addition, the article, "Managing Early Discharge: Preparation is Key," explores key issues in the debate about shortened hospitalization for maternity patients and newborns. Specific questions about maternity coverage and mother/baby health and wellness are included in a special, one-page checklist. For a copy of the *Health Report* send \$5.00 to the: NWHRC, 2425 L St. NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20037.

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| Sat. Apr. 5 | Rodin/Michelangelo Exhibit (Phila. 9am-7pm) | \$57* |
| Sat. Apr. 26 | Barnes Art Museum (Phila. 8:30am-7:30pm) | \$60* |
| Sat. June 14 | ABT at the Met (NYC 7:30 am-9:30 pm)
Company premiere of Franz Lehar's "The Merry Widow" | \$160*** |
| Sat. June 21 | "Steel Pier"—(NYC 7:30 am-9:30 pm)
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Foggy Bottom Folks

St. John's Church on Lafayette Square, one of the most historic, recently devoted its Sunday service to a music festival of songs and anthems. One of the pieces sung by the choir was an ancient Catalonian carol arranged almost 40 years ago by FB's **Walter Anderson**. After a closing acknowledgment from the rector, Anderson was greeted and thanked by a large number of parishoners.

Anderson may also be the only person we know who has a condominium exercise facility named after him. The Westbridge resident was unhappy with the look and layout of the building's exercise rooms, and took it upon himself to rearrange, redesign and redo them. The efforts increased its attractiveness and its use, and the building has named it after him and mounted a special plaque in his honor.

Happy to have some good news this issue about the hard-working lady from the York on 20th Street, **Laetitia Combrinck**. She was the "Foggy Bottom Friend" featured in *By George*. Laetitia, a native of South Africa, has been in the USA since 1966, and became a U.S. citizen in 1988. Active in the Gelman Library (she was heavily involved in the library's Foggy Bottom history exhibit), she also is involved with the York Tenants Association. She claims to be especially proud of her successful efforts to keep regular bus service (Route 80) running through our neighborhood. (And Jane Lingo's photo of Laetitia showed her bright smile to its best advantage.)

It's incredible how much difference a tree or two can make. Eye Street's **Tim Evans** finally and somewhat regretfully had two large magnolia trees removed from his front yard. All his neighbors were torn, as he probably was, by having to have

them removed when they were truly beautiful specimens. But they had outgrown their space, dropped hundreds of thousands of leaves almost too numerous to dispose of, and their dropped blossoms were hazardous to your walking health. Even weeks later we all wonder at what's missing in the block.

FBA's Treasurer **Hugh Grindstaff** has more or less hobnobbed with some other celebrities when he worked as an extra for a movie starring James Woods and Jodie Foster. Hugh reports that he was



Photo by Marshall Cohen

chosen for a walk-on part, and did perform for the cameras. In the scene he did indeed walk on to the set, but chuckled as he related that the scene was repeated ten times. He has promised to let us know when he makes his appearance in our local theaters.

The Wyndham Bristol Hotel is the location for FBA meetings, and its Bristol Grill was mentioned in an article on Thanksgiving dining and the growing practice of eat-out and take-out dining for the holiday. Singled out for special mention by a person interviewed by the writers was the Bristol's chocolate cheesecake. **Diana Contento**, the hotel's catering director, reported an extremely busy Thanksgiving for the dining room; she confessed, however, that she escaped the hotel that day and dined near her Arlington home.

United Church Chooses New German Pastor

The United Church has chosen **Alfred Radeloff** as its new Pastor, German Services; the appointment took effect January 1. He succeeds Pastor Gerhard Koslowsky who has been at United since November, 1993. The new pastor has served in German parishes since 1959 and as a leader of a church district, supervising 43 congregations and 32 pastors. Diana L. Ley is Senior Pastor at United.

The Foggy Bottom Diner

Marshall's Bar and Grille

By Jim Patterson

Perhaps the best kept dining secret in Foggy Bottom is Marshall's Bar and Grille, 2524 L Street; telephone 333-1155. An ideal restaurant for lunch and dinner appointments, Marshall's offers an excellent menu at excellent prices.

Appetizers, an interesting combination of hot and cold items, are priced under \$5; salad appetizers are a specialty. Entrees, a variety of meat, poultry, pasta and seafood items, are priced under \$20. The luncheon sandwich menu is also moderately priced. Be sure to check out Marshall's daily specials, which on a recent visit included fettuccine, with fresh scallops and spring onions; top-grade sirloin; and grilled salmon. The fettuccine was

perfection!

Marshall's lower level non-smoking dining room is a comfortable combination of tables and booths while the upper level offers full bar service and additional tables for smokers. The wine and beer menu offers something for virtually every taste.

Marshall's is that rare combination: high-quality food, affordable prices, excellent service, and great atmosphere. Readers of *The Foggy Bottom News* receive a 20 percent discount on all tickets for a limited time. Happy hours 4-7 p.m. everyday! Discover Marshall's today!

Jim Patterson reviews restaurants for *The Foggy Bottom News*.

home always makes on feel better.) We also hear another longtime FB resident is under the weather, **Mary Healy**. Hope she's well when she reads this, too!

And we were sorry to hear that **Melita Rodeck** had a serious run-in with a thief one evening in December. The arrival of a friend at the door scared him away, but he did take some of her possessions and roughed her up some.

Shouldn't happen to such a nice lady!

Even though IRS no longer sends tax forms the day after Christmas, it still is not our favorite piece of mail in early January. One possible way to ease concerns is to phone FB's **Joseph O'Donnell** for help with tax return preparation (and financial planning). See his ad in this issue; his phone number is 333-0727.



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Welcome to Betty's Box

Tidbits of news and information will appear monthly in this box in the *Foggy Bottom News* in memory of Betty Lawrence Olsen. She is fondly remembered by all in the neighborhood for her delightful columns 'Sidewalk Talk' and 'Biz Buzz' in this paper and her hard work as advertising manager. She was also on the Board of the Foggy Bottom Association and an active member of the community. This seems to us to be a great way to remember her and keep her in our thoughts!



One of her favorite sayings: "The sun rises and sets on us all" (said to her daughter when she felt her daughter was being selfish).

Stroke fact (Betty died from a stroke): Strokes occur in men more than women, but women die more often as a result of stroke. In fact stroke is the second leading cause of death in American women ages 45-64, killing more females than breast cancer.

Attention: Student Renters and Renters-to-Be

Are Renters Being Ripped Off in Burleith? Are You?

Maybe not. But maybe so. For houses renting for over \$2,400 per month the following are good indicators that an absentee landlord is taking undue advantage of student and other renters:

1. No central air conditioning for the whole house, or at least very good window air units of adequate strength.

2. Rundown exterior premises. If the house is shabby in appearance and in need of repair it is a substandard rental unit.

3. Rundown interior premises. If the house leaks at all, has prop-up windows and old simple locks, has rickety stairs or lingering odors it should be low, not high, rent.

4. No lawn care. It is good and necessary to keep up every

lawn, but for \$2,400 and up, arguably, renters should not have to do it themselves.

5. Illegal basement apartments or sleeping quarters, or tiny upstairs rental rooms or cubicles. In the R-3 single-family-zoned area of Burleith all second, separate units are out of compliance with the law.

6. Separate-rental parking space behind the house. This is a relatively new wrinkle, and is a secondary business. A \$2,400-plus house (much less a \$3,000 and up one) in a neighborhood such as Burleith normally comes with parking for a car or two — in a garage or in the open — at the rear of the house. There are exceptions, where back areas are yard space. If parking exists, however, it should fairly go to the tenants

who pay the exorbitant rent, and not operated as a separate business.

7. No screen or storm doors. Nothing is tackier than naked doorways, without outer screen or storm doors. These are relatively inexpensive to buy and install. Renters may demand them as a condition of renting.

8. Cramming numerous renters into small Burleith houses, at \$500 a head and up. If renters find that additional tenants keep coming into a rental house, they should demand a stop to it. One small house on R Street had had eleven renters in it at one time, some assigned bunk beds in the basement near pipes and meters. Other houses have or have had sleeping quarters in the living and dining rooms. Such existence is not conducive to morale, and is not the college or other memory one wants to carry for life.

What to do? Options are limited, but serious bargaining before signing a lease and steady complaining after signing one are ready recourses. All but the most callous landlords want easy tenants, no problems and a steady cash-flow. University housing policies abet the rooming house market, but it does not have to be a totally captive one. (Reprinted from *Burleith Citizens Association Newsletter*)

Ed. Note: The details may not apply to Foggy Bottom but the principles probably do.

Julia Roberts' Harvest Sweet Potatoes

4-6 large sweet potatoes (about 4 cups), cooked, peeled and mashed

1 cup milk

3 eggs, slightly beaten

1 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup butter or margarine melted

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/4 teaspoon salt

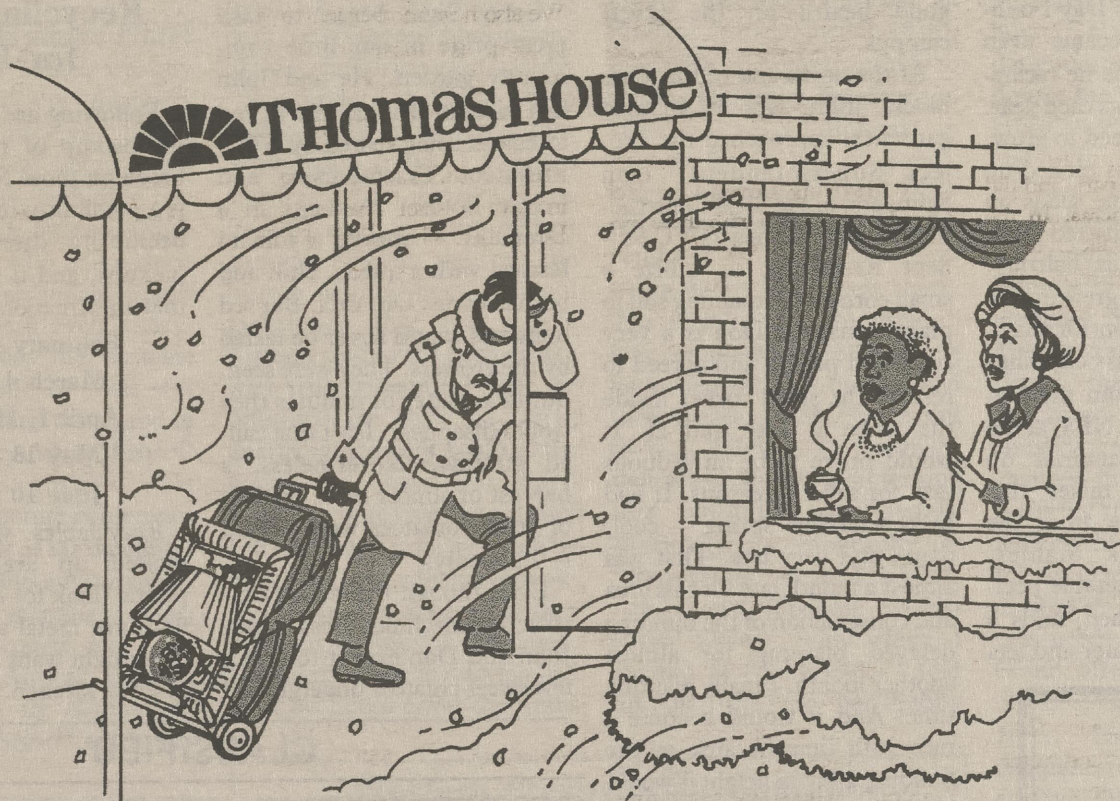
1/2 cup chopped pecans

1 cup miniature marshmallows

Combine all ingredients except pecans and marshmallows; mix thoroughly. Place in a buttered two-quart casserole. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 40 minutes. Top with pecans and marshmallows, and continue baking for five to 10 minutes longer or until marshmallows melt. Makes 10-12 servings.

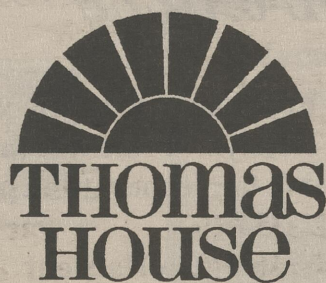
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John Graves, Foggy Bottom Horticulturist



Burton Moody, John Graves and Noel Gasparin stand with tools at the ready.

For two hot Augusts John Graves had carried buckets of water to the thirsty tree in front of St. Mary's Court. He had also watered the two sickly trees in front of the Odd Fellows Hall on the corner. All of these trees on the east side of this block were planted by the city about nine years ago, but only the one in the middle now stands tall. John's tree was the cull of the litter.

The City Council provided no help so he appealed to the city's Tree Department which he had worked with for many years on similar projects, but this time there were no funds for trees. However, Bill Beck, chief horticulturist for the city, wished him well and issued an official authorization to John to plant his own tree, so long as it was a sugar maple, to comply with that block plan. Armed with this permit John pursued his

tree project.

As a member of the Depression Era Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) John had planted many trees, so his interest was quite natural. As a member of the National Arbor Day Foundation his zeal became even more strong because he received ten small seedlings each year. They were guaranteed to grow, but didn't. He even picked up some of those maple seeds on the sidewalk and planted them in a big pot on his balcony. They sprouted and grew quickly. There is a reason for that.

John gets the grass clippings and dead leaves from the National Park Service (NPS) at the Benito Juarez Memorial on Virginia Avenue, mixes this with horse manure from the Rock Creek Park Stables, blends in a few vegetable peelings from his kitchen, adds a sprinkle of D.C. water and lets

the formula "cook" in a plastic bucket, covered with another plastic bucket to form sort of an oven. Each day he inverts the buckets in a "stirring" process. And "cook" it does, in the hot sun on the roof of his building.

Another planting season was closing so he appealed to his good neighbor, GWU Horticulturist Noel Gasparin, who declared the Arbor Day seedlings dead. Sympathizing with John's efforts and frustration he offered a strong healthy tree and planted it with all the professional techniques. He was also a friend of Bill Beck — tree "huggers" are a common fraternity. As a small gesture John "traded" his balcony sprout for the giant.

That was September 26. Two weeks later a bird had begun building a nest and today it is shedding its golden leaves, growing strong fortified by John's "formula." Noel says the maple sprout John "traded" him is growing strong and is in good health on the GWU campus.

At the north end of the same block, John, who is an avid gardener, approached the Project Superintendent, Don Saunders, of the Sigal Construction project, the new GWU Student Residence, to utilize a small corner of remaining soil to plant tomatoes. Don is a very congenial person and agreed to reserve the small corner inside the fence at 24th and H. It would prove to be an arduous task for several reasons. It had been a terrible spring — cool, damp and very late. That was almost a month late for this area and construction of the building delayed planting for almost another month. Finally planting time! And it would become a race with time because as the building grew in height it would block out the precious sun. Don cut an access door (with a padlock) so John could water the plants. That tiny precious plot had two Irish potato plants, one sweet potato, one Anaheim

Chili Pepper plant and five Beefsteak tomato plants which reached almost seven feet in height — nurtured by that "farmyard formula." However, the Irish potato plants died under the heavy feet and a 4x4 timber of a worker. As the plants grew they became attractive to passing neighbors.

As the tomatoes became red it became necessary to add a high protective chicken wire fence, but people even pulled that from the nails and long arms reached in from the sidewalk. On the inside that fruit attracted the hands of the construction workers. Don even brought in a heavy chain link fence with concrete footings to protect the garden from predators. We called it the "Lorton" fence! But strong tools pried even that loose. One Miller and Long worker was seen in broad daylight stripping the Hot Chili Pepper plant and filling his "hard hat"! Forget the insect pests — this is combat! Gardening in this ambience is a hazardous enterprise!

Gerry Sigal began to take great pride in our little community garden. He and John had visions of a harvest of red tomatoes being shared by GWU President Trachtenberg and Foggy Bottom residents in a ceremony — maybe a tomato festival with a queen, chili and hash browns. Oh, well. But red tomatoes would never be tasted by the growers. They were seen, but in a matter of minutes they would disappear. Isn't that called stealing? Nevertheless, a harvest of almost three bushels of green tomatoes were reaped — hurriedly!

Even though the heavy construction machines press closer, John and Don expect to find a few sweet potatoes underground



Foggy Bottom resident Bob Charles, accepts large tomato from John Graves as they stand in the midst of the vines.

at frost time; and to prove you can't fool Mother Nature, a few blossoms reappeared on that Hot Chili Pepper plant (behind the "Lorton Fence," of course).

Using his Grandmother's old Missouri recipe, John has canned 39 pints of Green Tomato Relish which he plants to share at Christmas time with friends and neighbors and your editor.

John moved to Foggy Bottom in 1947 and is a 1951 GWU graduate.

Recycling Dates for 1997

Following are the 1997 dates for pickup of recycled items, based on those for 1996. There is a possibility that the city will decide to discontinue these pickups, and if so we will run that information later.

February 4 and 18

March 4 and 18

April 1, 15 and 29

May 13 and 27

June 10 and 24

Recyclables which can be picked up are newspapers, plastic (look for #1 or #2 on the bottom), metal and junk mail. You might want to post this list in your kitchen.

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Rennie Remembers . . . Tarrytown, N.Y.

In the 1994 spring issue of the National Trust for Historic Preservation magazine, first-time tours were being offered at the John D. Rockefeller estate (called "Kykuit"), located in North Tarrytown, New York. I eagerly wrote for a brochure and, after its receipt, was even more intrigued and immediately phoned for a reservation. Alas, I was advised to call in 1995 as booking was filled for the 1994 period, but I did get a reservation later on. Also, I learned that there is a five-minute ride to the mansion on an 18-seat bus several times daily from the Visitors' Center in Tarrytown.

As no reservation was necessary for the nearby "Sleepy Hollow Restorations" (which I also planned on touring), I made a reservation for an overnight stay on Sunday, May 14th, at the "Tarrytown House." Some information about this historic hotel:

Historic Tarrytown Hotel

In the early 1900s, wealthy New York society members created its nucleus, lavish gardens, classical statuary and adjacent estates, including one of the tobacco heiress, Mary Duke Biddle, who had a stone "castle" and an indoor tennis court paved with French clay. In the early 1960s, the consulate of the Republic of Mali was briefly established there; and in 1964, "Tarrytown House" became the world's first dedicated corporate conference center, with all of the amenities of a country club environment, golf course, meeting rooms, pools, tennis courts, etc.

I took an Amtrak train to Penn Station in Manhattan, then a taxi to Grand Central Sta-

tion, where I purchased round-trip MetroNorth tickets before rushing to board the morning train to Tarrytown. When I handed my ticket to the conductor, I realized that the return ticket was not in my purse and thought perhaps the teller gave me only one ticket. Commenting to the conductor about this, I received his sympathy, saying that the ticket teller was apparently at fault; he advised me to speak to the stationmaster at Grand Central on my return Monday. (I would have to buy another ticket, to get there, however.) At the end of the 45-minute ride to Tarrytown, to my surprise, the courteous conductor approached me on the outside platform and gave me a ticket to use the next day — wasn't that a kind gesture by a "Big Apple" guy? (I am now embarrassed to admit that I later found the small ticket in my pocket, oops!)

Sunnyside Was Home of Washington Irving

I arrived at Tarrytown House by taxi around 1:00 p.m.; my room was not yet ready. The desk clerk suggested having one of their staff drive me to nearby "Sunnyside," the home of the 19th-century American author Washington Irving. I accepted and was driven there, where a friendly man, in attire of that period, briefed me on the history of the house. When I mentioned that the purple wisteria around the portcochere were truly a beautiful sight, he informed me that the thick, gnarled vines were as old as the house, i.e., over 100 years! While we were chatting, I heard and then saw a train whizzing by below the area which overlooked the Hudson River. "What a place for a house!" I exclaimed. He informed me that Irving had built his house *before* the trains

began to run in the 1840s (the last one still comes by about 10 p.m., ugh). A younger man escorted me and three other tourists inside the white stucco house with red-tiled roof, taking us into cordoned rooms containing lovely 19th-century American and European furniture and art work that belonged to Irving and his heirs. I especially enjoyed the library with its window-sill seats. We then entered the adjoining "tower house" that Irving had built for his guest and live-in nieces. (I thought that, except for the noisy train, it was truly a peaceful area for any writer to reside.)

Some information about Washington Irving: He was born in New York City in 1783 and became the *first* American author to win recognition in America and Europe. In his early writing career, he wrote under the nom de plume of Diedrich Knickerbock, his caustic criticisms of New York irritating many readers. He became a lawyer in 1809, a businessman in 1810 in the family hardware business in England (which failed in 1818), then devoted himself entirely to writing literature. He served in 1826 as a U.S. diplomat in Europe (Spain and England), where he stayed until 1832. After returning to America, he ventured out west and later wrote about his travels there. The erection of "Sunnyside" was completed in 1835, where he settled with his brother and three nieces. In 1842 he served as U.S. Minister to Spain for four years. Shortly after writing five volumes of George Washington's biography at "Sunnyside," he died in 1859.

A sweet Japanese tourist (from Kyoto), with whom I chatted at "Sunnyside," told me that she and her hubby

lived nearby in Tarrytown (since her hubby was out of town, she decided to visit "Sunnyside"). She informed me that I should also visit another historic house, "Lyndhurst." We walked down the long driveway to the gate of "Sunnyside," around the corner to an even longer road near the entrance of the former Lyndhurst stables and carriage house (now Visitors' Center), where we parted. There, I was greeted by a friendly docent and taken over to the mansion for a tour with a family from Maine.

Next Stop Was Lyndhurst

Lyndhurst is on a promontory (67 acres) above the Hudson River and had been designed in 1838 by Alexander J. Davis (famous N.Y. architect) for Ret. Gen. Wm. Paulding, former mayor of New York City. It was constructed of gray/white Sing-Sing marble, the first of a series of houses to be called "Hudson River Gothic." It was then named "The Knoll." In 1864, a New York City merchant, George Merritt, purchased the property, renaming it "Lyndhurst." He retained Davis for designing an enlargement of the house, the stables, a new large greenhouse, employees' houses and additional furniture. Merritt was an avid horticulturist and collaborated with Davis for the development of the grounds, along with the expert master-gardener, Frederick Mangold. Merritt died in 1887, and Jay Gould, the railroad magnate, purchased the property as a country retreat. Only minor changes to the mansion were made by the Goulds, but they took credit (the guide said) for the architecture, landscape, etc. created by Merritt et al. Only a new green house was built by Gould after Merritt's burned down. When Gould died in 1892, Helen, the oldest daughter, took charge. She added a bowling alley, a swimming pool, a laundry facility, a school room, a kennel, her children's cottage, tennis courts, a golf course and a bowling green.

After she died in 1938, her younger sister Anna (Duchess of Talleyrand-Perigord) returned

from France to manage Lyndhurst, which she impeccably maintained until her death in 1961. In her will, she bequeathed it to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and it was opened for public tours in 1964. Needless to say, I enjoyed the tour of this mansion's architecture, exquisite furnishings/art work, and its carriage house full of well-maintained, elegant vintage carriages and harnesses. At the gift shop, I inquired how I could telephone the hotel for a ride back. Instead of directing me to a public phone, the guide called on her phone — another kind person!

A hotel driver came and drove me to the hotel, where he picked up my key and bag. Then he drove me (in a golf cart!) to my room in the two-story West Chester building. (Such transportation is provided as the hotel is really a conference center, with a huge complex of rooms in several two-story buildings, a golf course, a swimming pool, meeting rooms, dining facilities, and acres of picturesque landscape. I freshened up in my appealing room before having dinner at 6:00 p.m. in another building resembling a mansion. The maitre d' escorted me to the main glass-enclosed dining room with fantastic views, and the charming waiter, Claudio, gave me excellent attention. He first brought me the menu, then bread/butter, and a lite beer and salad that I ordered; I chose flounder as my entree. He came back with another menu as he said it was the wrong menu! This time I ordered halibut and, when it arrived at 7 p.m., it was very welcome by yours truly — luckily for Claudio, I was too exhausted from the lack of sleep the night before, the train-taxi trip and the house tours, to complain (the lite beer helped a bit, too). A buffet table was laden with cakes, fruit tarts and fresh fruit, from which I chose a thin slice of coconut cake and some berries. Claudio brought hot tea and lemon and by 7:30 p.m. I paid the bill. The food was delicious and the service excellent — despite the delay of

Continued on page 8.

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Rennie Remembers

from page 7.

the entree. I walked back to the room, showered and relaxed, looking forward to "Kykuit."

A copy of the paid hotel bill had been slipped under my door while I slept, along with a note thanking me for staying and, for my convenience, asking me to leave the key on the bureau by noon. Very thoughtful! After bathing and dressing, I went down to the dining house, where I was met by a waitress, who was surprised that I came for breakfast, informing me that they stopped serving at 9 a.m. — it was about 8:45 a.m. (The waiter last night told me it was open until 9:30 a.m.) Apparently the female maitre d' heard our conversation and politely ushered me to a smaller glass-enclosed area, where I encountered other "late" guests. The waitress might have been disturbed as she was required to serve everyone coffee. The food was the usual buffet: sausage, potatoes, scrambled eggs, bacon, rolls, fresh fruit, and yogurt. (My daily breakfast at home is always a bowl of fresh fruit with decaf coffee. When I travel, I seem to eat food *not* generally eaten.) Back in my room, after packing my luggage, I phoned the desk clerk for a taxi at my building by 10:30 a.m., as my tour at "Kykuit" was at 11:00 a.m. It came promptly and I enjoyed the scenic ride through the town to the Philipsburg Manor's gift shop/cafe, where the "Kykuit" tour buses depart and return.

Kykuit of the Rockefellers

I checked in with the tour leader and boarded the bus for the short ride to "Kykuit." Its construction was completed in 1913 by J.D. Rockefeller, Jr. and was home to four generations of Rockefellers. The

Rockefeller Brothers Fund maintains "Kykuit" and operates it as a center for their philanthropic programs (it was one of the "Sleepy Hollow Restorations" founded in 1951 by JDR, Jr.) As the other two historic houses I visited yesterday, it overlooks the Hudson River. The neo-classical country-house design and landscaping resemble many beautiful European estates I visited — breathtaking! Only a tour of the main floor is permitted, along with the coach barn and the expansive terraced gardens. It is three storied and furnished with an exquisite collection of antiques, Chinese ceramics, and art. The Picasso tapestries and other abstract works in the late Nelson Rockefeller's lower-floor art gallery were not appealing to me and some of my fellow tourists. In the gardens, however, modern and classical sculptures, ponds, flower gardens, fountains, and stone terraces were lovely sights to behold. The coach barn houses the family's collection of classic autos and horsedrawn carriages, which are always a thrill for me to see.

Gov. Nelson Rockefeller and his family resided at the mansion for 19 years. His widow, "Happy," still resides there in the Japanese House, which is not part of the tour. They relaxed on their own golf course and at other recreational facilities there on weekends and vacations, as well as entertaining or meeting with world leaders. Nelson bequeathed "Kykuit" to the National Trust at his death in 1979.

After the almost 2-1/2 hour tour, we returned to the Visitors' Center. I ate in its cafe (excellent chicken salad, apricot tart and tea) and was glad to hear that the Pinkster Festival on the grounds had ended (the

children that had been inside the Center earlier were loud and rowdy). It has been held each spring, since the 18th and 19th centuries, on the property of the manor, across the wooden bridge connected to the Visitors' Center. An 18th-century trading post, it was owned by a Dutch merchant, whose slaves operated the farm and the grist-mill. It is now the property of "Historic Hudson Valley," a non-profit, educational organization that interprets the history, culture and landscape of the valley. I walked over the bridge and was instructed by a guide at the manor to walk about the farm area and return for a tour. I spoke (literally!) to a lamb, a fluffy cat (one of six, I learned!), a couple of cows, goats and an ox — only the cat responded, knowing that I'm a cat person, I guess. I was admiring two lovely white swans in the lake and was informed by a man nearby that they were given the names of "Frederick" and "Martha," and they were not friendly with the Canada geese in the area. "Martha" was building a nest in the water, since someone (or something) stole her eggs from the nest she had created on the bank. Clever bird! I was then taken on a tour of the house and grist-mill, which I found interesting.

I went back over to the Visitors' Center, where videos were being shown of the houses I had seen yesterday and today. After picking up my luggage and umbrella, being held at the gift shop (nothing but a purse is allowed at "Kykuit") and buying a few items, I waited for the taxi called by the docent. (Such kind people up there!) At the Tarrytown train station, I walked around trying all of the doors, but the station was apparently closed. I spoke to a man getting out of a car nearby, who told me to take the elevator and walk to the other side above the track for the express train to Manhattan — otherwise, I'd be going to Poughkeepsie! (I had planned on taking a train arriving later; thanks to this nice man, he really helped me to get to NYC and D.C. earlier.) The train reached Manhattan's Grand

Neighborhood Datebook

Sunday, January 26: National Musical Arts presentation of "In Praise of the Freedoms of Speech, Expression, and Religion: The 20th Anniversary of Charter 77." In cooperation with the Embassy of the Czech Republic, music of Leos Janacek, Erwin Schulhoff, Bohuslav Martinu and Petr Eben will be featured. National Academy of Sciences, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W. 4:00 p.m.

Monday, January 27: Foggy Bottom Association meeting, with Anthony A. Williams, D.C.'s Chief Financial Officer, as principle speaker. Wyndham Bristol Hotel, 2430 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. 7:30 p.m.

Thursday-Sunday, February 20-23: "As You Like It," a romantic comedy by William Shakespeare, presented by GW Department of Theatre and Dance. Dorothy Betts Marvin Theatre, 800 21st Street, N.W. \$8 General; \$5 Students/Seniors. Thursday-Saturday, 8:00 p.m. Sunday, 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 23: National Musical Arts concert, "A Brahms Centenary — 1833-1897," Johannes Brahms' Clarinet Quintet, C Minor String Quartet, B Major Piano Trio. National Academy of Sciences, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W. 4:00 p.m.

Central Station about 5 p.m., and I took a cab to Penn Station for a 5:30 p.m. train to D.C. My conversation with my seat mate, a friendly and handsome young man, revealed that he commuted daily from Bala Cynwyd (Philadelphia) to Wall Street, and that he is a cousin of Efraim and Stephanie Zimbalist of movie/TV fame. We chatted about Philadelphia, where I had resided for almost ten years in the 1950s. Even though the train was late in departing NYC, I arrived at Union Station at 9:30 p.m., getting home by taxi at 9:45 p.m. (instead of 10:45 p.m.) Although it was only a two-day trip, I appreciated the kindness of people enroute and in Tarrytown, besides the aesthetic environment that I enjoyed at the hotel and the houses I toured.

Dimock Gallery

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Renovations

The Dimock Gallery, located on the lower level of Lisner Auditorium, underwent significant renovations over the summer. Included were modernization of its appearance, resulting in a new, "brighter" look, following a new white vinyl tile floor, new picture mouldings, new track lighting and new white paint. The gallery, which has operated for over 30 years, reopened with a sculpture exhibition, and GW Fine Arts Faculty Show (ceramics, mixed media, painting, photography and sculpture), February 13 - March 21.

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